

At the beginning of the year I entered on duty as stenographer to the firm of Scott & Baldwin. They were both fine men. Judge Scott was a large, burley, good natured, hardheaded, short man who had been successful as a lawyer and a judge. He was the leading pillar of the local Congregationalist Church and lived in a pretentious house near the church. Mr. Baldwin was a polished southern gentleman, also a successful lawyer, and was building a new residence. They had retired from the active practice of law to act as agents in ~~lending~~ ^{lending} money on real estate that was supplied by British and Scottish life insurance companies. The ~~loans were made~~ ^{money was loaned} on a basis of one-third the appraised value of land, ~~was~~ ^{were} secured by first mortgages, with interest at ten per cent, of which the firm kept two per cent for its services. On the three and one-half million dollars they had outstanding ~~their~~ commission amounted to about \$70,000 per annum. In addition they charged a fee of \$5 for drawing up the papers for each loan and for each renewal, and required that each borrower should pay for an abstract of title at the rate of one dollar per transfer, which might be anywhere from \$5 to \$25 on each piece of property. Their only expense was the rental of a large room and an annex on the second floor of a bank building, one bookkeeping clerk at \$75 per month, my own services at \$60 per month, and a janitor at \$25 per month. The bookkeeper, Albert Seales, was a plump, self-satisfied young man with a black mustache and very religious.

In addition to the shorthand and typewriting work of the office I assisted the bookkeeper, and soon learned something of the laws governing land titles, mortgages, deeds of trust, liens, promissory notes, and the like, how to search the court records and make abstracts of land titles, and to draw up all the legal

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7 papers of various kinds connected with real estate loans. Occasionally I had a call to report Court Reporting ~~the~~ proceedings in the courts, and during the summer I received a telegram from a firm of New York lawyers to go to Dallas at their expense and report the litigation over a railway. This was my first trip on a railway since I was a child. I bought my first railway ticket, was so afraid that I would miss the train that I was at the depot more than half an hour before the train arrived, and felt very diffident in the day coach with its elegant and luxurious seats covered with ~~max~~ gorgeous red plush. After I had recovered my selfpossession I was greatly scandalized at the conduct of a man and a woman in one of the seats in front of me. They were so utterly shameless as to lay their heads together and he put his arm around her shoulders and kissed her in plain sight of all the other passengers. At Sherman, Texas, I had to change cars, and this bothered me a good deal. Arrived at Dallas, where the buildings were larger and the traffic ^tgreater than anything to which I was accustomed, including electric trolley cars which I saw for the first time, I was again somewhat confused. I asked a policeman for the name of a hotel and he directed me to one that had formerly been considered the best in Texas but was then eclipsed by more modern structures. I felt very awkward in the hotel until after my first meal.

The next morning I walked to the courthouse and succeeded in finding one of the group of attorneys by ^{whom} ~~which~~ I was employed. The case opened promptly at 9 a.m. before a judge of the U.S. Circuit Court and the early procedure consisted in reading and filing a series of depositions, affidavits, and other papers, and the arguments of opposing attorneys. It was a suit for a re-

ceivership of a railroad in southern Texas which was opposed by a group of British stockholders who were represented by an English gentleman who more nearly corresponded in appearance and manners ^{with} the American idea of the typical Englishman than any other person I have met. He was middle-aged, of medium height, stout, florid, with blue eyes, bristling gray hair and whiskers, and wore a light checked suit, a dazzlingly red waistcoat, and spats. He was very choleric, spoke the English language as I had never heard it spoken before, and was continually expressing astonishment at everything he heard or saw. He brought with him two attorneys from New York City and had employed four others of the Texas bar. I was instructed to take in shorthand all that was said by the opposing counsel and the judge. The morning session ended at noon and we took a recess of an hour for luncheon. Court reopened at 1 p.m. and continued until 6 p.m.

After supper Mr. John Bull and his attorneys met in a room and discussed the case from various angles and from time to time dictated depositions. There were long pauses when I had nothing to do but listen to the arguments of the attorneys and their attempts to explain to their employer the intricacies of the Texas law as applied to soulless corporations, especially foreign corporations. During one of these intervals along about midnight I became interested in watching the antics of two cockroaches that came out of a dark corner. They seemed to be full of curiosity, but very timid. Cautiously they would advance a few feet and then scamper back a short distance, turn about to see if anyone pursued, wave their antennae, and then in an uncertain and erratic manner advance farther into the room. As they darted

hither and thither and approached nearer and nearer to Mr. John Bull I got to speculating and betting with myself as to what would happen when he saw them. Finally the smaller and more venturesome of the roaches, followed by the larger one, darted in front of the chair in which the Englishman was sitting, stopped, looked up at him and both waved their antennae wildly. Just at the moment Mr. Bull, whose mind was concentrated on the vagaries of American law and gazing intently in front of him, let his eyes drop. Seeing the two highly interested black bugs looking him over with lively curiosity, he jumped to his feet and then onto the chair and exclaimed in an agitated voice, "What are they, what are they; are they tarantulas or centepeds; will they bite; do they jump; are they poisonous?" The attorneys, interrupted in their attempt to untangle some legal knot, looked calmly at the two black bugs scurrying across the floor, and one of them answered "Only a roach; it won't bite." To me this little drama was extremely amusing and to avoid laughing I bent my head and began filling a page with geometrical figures. The seance lasted until after midnight and I was asked to typewrite the depositions and declarations that had been dictated to me and have the copies ready for signature at 8 a.m. the following morning. By working steadily I had the papers ready on time, but without any sleep.

I got a light breakfast and a cup of coffee after delivering the documents and was ~~at~~ in the court room promptly at 9 a.m. when the proceedings opened. They continued until after 4 p.m. Much of the argument was about the interpretation of the terms "consolidation," "merger," and "amalgamation." I had not dreamed that educated men could construe words to mean so many widely

different things, each citing the same or different well known authorities in support of his contentions. ^H During the afternoon I had extreme difficulty in keeping awake. I was drowsy and my eyelids would close at times in spite of my effort to keep them open. I seemed to hear the arguments of the attorneys as in a dream or sort of trance and to record in shorthand what was said without seeing what I was writing. At one point I was aroused by hearing the judge call a halt in the proceedings and remark to the attorneys that he had noticed the reporter prick up his ears, and asking the attorney who was last speaking if he did not wish to correct his remarks. I was dimly conscious that the attorney had said inadvertently that a certain railway was 25 miles in length from San Francisco to the point where it joined another railway. I knew he meant to say 25 hundred miles, and so wrote it, but I must have glanced up with an expression on my face that attracted the attention of the judge. The attorney apologized and thanked the judge. After the session closed I was in a state of almost complete collapse, having worked continuously for almost 36 hours.

I returned to Paris the next day with a feeling of triumph to think that I had successfully reported an important case involving millions in a United States court. By working nights I wrote out the transcript the following week, sent copies to the attorneys in New York with my bill, which amounted to nearly \$200.00. During the summer my salary was raised to \$75 a month so that with outside work I was making about \$100 a month. Also I was learning a good deal about land titles, commercial law, and court procedure. I was the only shorthand reporter in Paris and was acquainted with all the lawyers, preachers, and doctors.

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The Farmers E--317. Alliance

7 During the summer the Farmers Alliance and Populist parties conducted a vigorous campaign in the country districts. This was high treason in the eyes of the died-in-the-wool Democrats who had had things their own way since the Civil War. I was asked by the editor of the local paper to attend a gathering in a country schoolhouse eight or ten miles northwest of Paris and report verbatim the words of a speaker who was suspected of deserting the ranks of simon pure democracy. The editor agreed to furnish a horse and buggy and pay me ten dollars for the report. The embarrassing thing about this assignment was that I was to take the speech in shorthand without letting the speaker suspect what I was doing so that he would not be on his guard. I was given a note of introduction to a farmer who was known to be loyal and who would accompany me to the schoolhouse and put me up for the night. Another embarrassment was the fact that another farmer of the same name lived in the same neighborhood who was a renegade and sympathizer with the Populists and therefore to be avoided. I succeeded in finding the right farmhouse and after dark was conducted to the schoolhouse. The farmer and I sat off to one side where I could have some light from a lamp hung on a peg in the wall. The attendance was small, not more than a dozen of the neighbors showing up. I was recognized as a stranger immediately and because of the small attendance it was impossible to conceal the fact that I was writing notes, and I did not try to conceal it. However, I found that the habit I had formed of automatically visualizing shorthand characters while listening enabled me to write almost automatically with my eyes fixed more or less constantly on the speaker's face, only glancing

down from time to time to see that I kept well within the margins of my notebook. In this way I did not attract much attention. The speaker was a local justice of the peace and aspired to some higher office. His speech was a description of the hardships of farmers and a harangue against the moneyed interests of Wall Street, with frequent references to the Goulds, Vanderbilts, Astors, and one particularly diabolical man named John D. Rockefeller, who unquestionably had horns, cloven feet, and a barbed tail, and who piled up millions and millions of dollars by oppressing farmers and robbing widows and orphans. This was the first time I had heard the name Rockefeller and ~~the name~~ *it* gave me a lot of trouble, first in hearing it correctly and then in trying to hit upon a shorthand character that would correctly represent it on the spur of the moment. The speaker, however, refrained from saying anything treasonable about the holy Democratic party so that I suspect the editor was disappointed at the report I turned in.

I Become a Capitalist.

My savings were gradually mounting in a most gratifying manner and I began to think how I might invest them. I spoke to Judge Scott and asked if the firm would lend the money for me. He said it was a rule of the company not to loan less than \$1,000, but they had made a few exceptions and would make one for me, as they occasionally had applications from deserving people for smaller amounts. In the course of a month the firm put a few hundred dollars of my money out at the legal rate of 10 per cent interest.

Civil Service Examination

7 In the autumn I read in the local paper a notice of a civil service examination for stenographers and typewriters to be held in Dallas and ~~was~~ to the effect that those who successfully pass-

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ed the examination would be eligible for appointment in the service of the United States Government. I wrote to the Civil Service Commission at Washington about it and two weeks later received a card of admission to the examination. When I asked Mr. Baldwin for leave of absence to take the examination he rather demurred and asked why I wanted to take the examination and whether I was dissatisfied with my present employment. I assured him that I was not dissatisfied, but as the examination was said to be competitive I wanted to enter the competition and see whether I could pass it or not. On the train to Dallas I became acquainted with a young man bound on the same mission for the examination as railway mail clerk. On reaching Dallas late in the evening we went to a cheap rooming house and occupied the same room and bed. The next morning I called at a typewriter agency and arranged to have a machine sent to the courthouse where the examination was to be held. At the appointed time I was admitted to the examination room, filled out various blanks, and took the prescribed examination. There were about 40 others. The examination consisted of written questions in grammar, spelling, composition, history, geography, dictation for shorthand at different speeds, copying on the typewriter from rough draft, and writing on the typewriter from oral dictation. I found the examination simple and easy, except that I suffered somewhat from stage fright in shorthand and typewriting. I was told that the papers would have to go to Washington for rating and the results of the examination would not be known for some months.

The Chicago University

About this time I saw references in the newspapers

